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PROGRAM The Joel Spivak Show

STATION WRC Radio

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SUBJECT Admiral Stansfield Turner

JOEL SPIVAK: ...I just saw the door open and the DCI just walked in. As a matter of fact, he's walking right into the studio.

How are you, Admiral Turner?

I didn't think -- Stansfield Turner just walked in here. I didn't think I'd be talking to you again.

ADMIRAL STANSFIELD TURNER: Different subject than yesterday.

SPIVAK: This fellow on the phone, Admiral, his brother is down there at that St. George's medical college.

And what'd you say, Mark, you talked to him last night?

MAN: Right. I spoke to him last night. There's still communication there. I called this morning, also, and I wasn't able to get through to his particular line. But they still have communication with the island itself.

SPIVAK: And he said his brother told him that the Grenadian military was anticipating something like this, so they were already digging trenches around the island. I guess they must have figured something was going to come, Admiral.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the word got out yesterday that we had sent forces down there in preparation. So I'm sure they were concerned about that. I can't imagine that the Grenadian

military is going to give our military much of a go for it at this stage. It sounds like we've got the airfield secured. It's only 500 miles from there to Puerto Rico, where we have a major set of bases. So once we get a good airfield, we ought to be able to bring in predominant force very, very quickly.

SPIVAK: I just -- the other night on Nightline I saw Ted Koppel talking with -- I think it was the Prime Minister of Barbados. I hope I'm not misspeaking myself. But it was the prime minister of one of the larger islands down there, who said that it was his feeling that most of the people who live in that region were kind of hoping that we would do this.

Do you have any feeling about that at all, Admiral?

ADMIRAL TURNER: Really, I don't. Though listening to the Prime Minister of Dominica talking with the President on television this morning, it sounds as though those countries were quite aligned.

Now, almost all of those countries involved in this are former British colonies. They do have a sort of cohesiveness because of their Anglophile background. And I think it's quite possible that Grenada was a real aberration in that part of the world and was not liked or accepted by the rest of them.

I wonder if your listener here can tell us, you know, why his brother was in Grenada and why are there so many Americans going to medical school down there, and such forth?

MAN: Well, the reason there are a lot of medical students there is, obviously, the AMA has a tight control over admissions here. And there are a lot of people who are qualified and competent medical students who were unable to get into American medical schools because of restrictive policies at medical school. And so what has happened is there's been a growth in recent years of a lot of foreign medical schools, not only in the Caribbean -- Grenada's been rated as one of the best medical schools in that area, and it's operated by Americans. In fact, it's operated out of Long Island in New York.

SPIVAK: Very interesting.

MAN: And all the teachers there are Americans. So usually what will happen is it'll be doctors who either teach at American medical schools and go down there in the winter.

SPIVAK: Listen, Mark. Keep your radio on. Thanks for calling.

MAN: If I can ask the General a question.

SPIVAK: He's an Admiral. All right.

ADMIRAL TURNER: I've been promoted, anyway.

MAN: My question is, after, you know, the regime, the present regime is stabilized, whatever, the country is stabilized, what do you think is going to happen in that country? I mean now don't we have a situation on our hands where -- how long are we going to have to keep troops in there? What are we going to do, politically, down there once we stabilize the military situation? What do you think will happen?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I think we have a very touch situation here. If the people of Grenada really don't want to change governments, would rather have either the Bishop government back -- not him personally, 'cause he's dead; but his regime -- or the regime that we've just, presumably, toppled, and that's what they would vote for democratically, what do we do? We're in a terrible mess.

If the people of Grenada are more like their neighbors on Dominica and these other islands and would vote for a democratic government, and we can find that kind of leadership there, then everything will be reasonably good after a while. We'll restore order, we'll get the Cubans and the Soviets to leave, and set up a new government, people will elect it, and hopefully we can get out in a few months.

MAN: Any idea how many Soviets are down there?

ADMIRAL TURNER: I've just heard the number 600 Cubans and a handful of Soviets.

SPIVAK: Yeah. Well, that's going to be another sticky wicket, isn't it?

MAN: Yes, if any of them are injured.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, that will be. Though one hopes this is going to be a reasonably peaceful takeover here. It sounds like it's off to that kind of start.

SPIVAK: Admiral, from a policy standpoint -- incidentally, he's not a General. He's an Admiral. His name is Stansfield Turner. And up until not too long ago, he was the head of Central Intelligence Agency.

From a policy standpoint, in your opinion, does this make sense for us to do something like this?

ADMIRAL TURNER: It's in line with the very strong stand of the Reagan Administration against letting Communism, Marxism

spread in this hemisphere. I happen to think that's a little overstretched, myself; that Communism, Marxism isn't that big a threat in some of these smaller countries. But I do think that this will be generally acceptable as a policy for the United States.

It raises one very fundamental question. A number of years ago, Mr. Brezhnev, head of the Communist government in the Soviet Union, declared what was called the Brezhnev Doctrine --that is, no country would turn democratic in his orbit, in his Eastern European orbit in particular. We, in effect, are declaring the Brezhnev/Reagan Doctrine now, that we're not going to let countries in this hemisphere, whether they do it through the ballot box or through a coup, turn Communist.

It makes us a little edgy when we try to say, "Well, the Soviets shouldn't go into Afghanistan," for instance, "in order to protect their interests there."

SPIVAK: Well, the President was already hit this morning with at least one question, I think asked by Helen Thomas, which had to do with -- well, I think she asked it of Eugenia Charles, the Prime Minister of Dominica. And the question was, "Do you think it's right for the United States to impose its will on another sovereign state in order to tell them what kind of government they're supposed to have?"

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, I think what I was trying awkwardly to get at a minute ago is if we try to impose our will -- that is, we insist it's a democratic government, and the people don't really want a democratic government -- then we're going to have a terrible time. We almost have to stay there and run the country, or get out in somewhat disgrace.

I don't think that's likely to be the case. But it runs a risk here: Can we find a suitable government, and can we persuade the people that that's what they want, in order for us to then pull out and turn it over to them?

SPIVAK: Before you walked in I was just saying I was on Grenada several years ago. Ever been there?

ADMIRAL TURNER: No, I haven't.

SPIVAK: Well, my impression, Admiral, was that the poverty on that island was so overwhelming that if ever there was a place that was ripe for Marxism -- I left the island thinking that -- it was Grenada, you know. It depressed me so. I couldn't wait to leave.

ADMIRAL TURNER: Well, the average per capita income is \$800. That is, each person on Grenada has an income of about

\$800. Now, our listeners can think about what that means in terms of...

SPIVAK: That's an annual income.

ADMIRAL TURNER: That's an annual income. Yes. Not a weekly income.

SPIVAK: Well, okay.

Admiral, thank you for stopping by. Good to see you again.